DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 162 770 RC 010 619

TITLE Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care Workshop, Conference Minutes (Helena, Montana, May 15 and 16, 1975).

INSTITUTION Mountain States Regional Medical Program.

PUB DATE 15 May 75

NOTE 28p.; Not available in hard copy due to poor print quality of original document ; Veterans Administration Center, Fort Harrison, Mont., contributed to the Workshop

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS Agency Role; *American Indians; *Cultural Awareness; Cultural Exchange; Cultural Factors; Delivery Systems; *Federal Programs; Health Facilities; Health Personnel; *Health Services; Hospitals; Nonreservation American Indians; *Patients (Persons); Reservations (Indian); Stereotypes; Tribes; Urban Areas; *Veterans; Workshops

IDENTIFIERS Indian Health Service; Montana; *Veterans Administration

ABSTRACT

Members of the Veterans Administration (VA) Center, Ft. Harrison, Montana, and the Mountain States Regional Medical Program met with members of the Helena Indian Alliance and the Montana United Indian Association to discuss total services available to all veterans and their beneficiaries. Indian and VA officials promoted the two-way exchange of ideas on the dynamics of Indian culture on health care. The topics of five panel discussions were: "The Indian Stereotype and How it Affects Health Care", "V.A. Hospital and G.I. Benefits", "Special Needs of the Urban Indian (Landless, Off-reservation and Federally Recognized)", "Special Needs of the Reservation Indian", and "What Indian Health Service Offers and Coordination With Other Health Services". Veterans Administration officials explained the requirements and procedures for taking advantage of all the services available to Indians. Among the specific suggestions and recommendations for improving services were sending pamphlets to Tribal Councils for distribution, having an Indian veteran on each reservation to work with veterans in identifying problems and answers, and encouraging Indian veterans to duplicate their discharge papers at the county court house. Further suggestions and recommendations, as well as the minutes of planning sessions that culminated in the workshop, are included. (EJ/BR)

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MOUNTAIN STATES
REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAM--MONTANA*

and

THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION CENTER
Fort Harrison, Montana

CONFERENCE MINUTES

DYNAMICS OF INDIAN CULTURE ON HEALTH CARE WORKSHOP

May 15 and 16, 1975
Helena, Montana

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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*Mountain States Regional Medical Program, encompassing Idaho, Montana, Nevada and Wyoming, is one of the nation's RMPs. It is supported by Division of Regional Medical Programs, a division of Health Resources Administration, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

RC 010619

CONFERENCE MINUTES

DYNAMICS OF INDIAN CULTURE ON HEALTH CARE WORKSHOP

May 15 and 16, 1975

Jorgenson's Holiday Inn
Restaurant Banquet Hall

Mr. Eddie Barbeau of Helena Indian Alliance and Montana United Indian Association opened the workshop on May 15 at 1:00 p.m. and introduced the following participants who were dressed in beautifully beaded leather Indian costumes and elaborate Indian head dresses:

Mr. Warren Bear Cloud, Crow Reservation, Hardin, sang the Indian salute to the flag, accompanied by Indian drum.

Mr. Tom Yellowtail, Crow Reservation, Wyola, spoke an Indian blessing on the group assembled.

Mr. Charles Walter, Director, VA Center, Fort Harrison, extended a welcome to all and brought greetings from Mountain States Regional Medical Program and the VA. He thanked Jorgenson's for the accommodations furnished, recognized the service organizations for their services to veterans, expressed appreciation to the news media for their releases, and gave special thanks to Eddie Barbeau, who was instrumental in erecting a tepee in front of the VA Hospital and furnishing a display of Indian artifacts for the VA Hospital lobby. Those present were invited to view this display, as well as the "Avenue of Flags", and to tour the hospital from 8:00 to 8:30 a.m. tomorrow morning.

This workshop is a step the VA at Fort Harrison is taking for the purpose of giving total service to all veterans and their beneficiaries. An exchange of cultural differences between Indians and whites will result in better understanding. This 2-way exchange will equip VA staff to better assist Indian veterans, both on and off the reservations, and encourage Indians to come to the VA for assistance at any time when needed. VA staff and Service Officers stationed at information tables throughout the conference room were available to clarify questions relating to various VA programs those present might have. Application forms and literature pertaining to hospitalization, employment and various VA programs are available.

To provide better service in the field, a DAV mobile van will be in the state May 19 to June 6, covering all major cities in Montana. The VA mobile van will be in the state during the month of September, 1975.

The first panel, moderated by Charles (Jack) Plumage, Fort Belknap Community Council, Harlem, discussed the subject "The Indian Stereotype and How it Affects Health Services." Panel members were:

Donavan Archambault, Fort Belknap Reservation, Harlem
Rudy Buckman, Fort Belknap Reservation, Harlem
Judy Gray, Social Welfare Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Inez Brock, Field Nurse, PHS Indian Hospital
Ruth LaMere, Field Nurse, PHS Indian Hospital
Joe Plumage, Indian Health Service, Blackfeet Reservation, Browning

Points brought out included:

1. What is an Indian? Indian people had a good life in the beginning many years ago. They lived in harmony with nature, had a political social system and a religious system. The white world is a world of production; the Indian world is a nature oriented world. A white looks at nature as something to be exploited; the Indian world lives in harmony with nature. Indian time is any time; in the white world it is regimented. The old ways are gone, the Indian can not return to them and they are changing with the times.

2. Pain. Indians endure pain stoically. Many times they will use their own medical remedies. "I am going to tough it out" you hear often.

3. Hospitalization is provided by Indian Health Service. Like anyone, Indian senior citizens are reluctant to enter a hospital. They want many of their family present when hospitalized. Communicating with doctors is difficult, but if enough time is spent with the patient and full information is given, their attitude is much better and resistence to treatment lessens. Indian doctors are preferred; however there is a shortage, as in the U.S. there are only 90 Indian doctors and 270 Indian RN's. Checking out of the hospital AMA is common, mainly due to the fact that doctors do not or can not spend enough time with the patient to make him understand.

4. Death among Indians is accepted as a natural part of life; there is no fear of death. Wakes are practiced.

5. Alcoholism is considered one of the biggest problems in the Indian Nation. Probably 45 or 50% of patients treated are alcohol related. Effects on family and children cause problems. As of July 1, 1975 detox centers were set up on every reservation; since that time alcoholics have been taken to a detox center or a hospital rather than to jail, since alcoholism is considered a health related disease. There is a high incidence of suicide attempts.

   It is felt that most alcoholic probems are tied in with unemployment of the father, which results in frustration, which leads to drinking. Reservations have only three sources of employment: Bureau of Indian Affairs, Indian Health Service and Tribal Administration Program.

Indian women are doing a great deal to understand alcoholism problems. The detox program is new and will take time to become fully successful.

Mr. Plumage closed by saying, "We are born, we live, we cry, we drink, and grow old. So we are no different than you."

15-minute coffee break at 3:15 p.m.

The second panel, moderated by Charles Walter, discussed "VA Hospital Benefits and GI Benefits." Panel members were:

Dr. John J. Mitschke, Jr., Chief, Outpatient Service, VA Center
Jo Anne Meyers, Outpatient Service, VA Center
Martin Bleskey, Chief, Veterans Services Division, VA Center
Bill Raines, Chief, Personnel Service, VA Center

Dr. Mitschke emphasized that all veterans are entitled to VA hospital care, including Indian veterans, whether service-connected or not. He listed the priorities that determine hospital admission.

Dr. Mitschke explained services available under:

1. The outpatient treatment program.

2. The ambulatory care program.

3. Pharmacy Service medications available at no cost to the veteran.

4. The dental outpatient treatment program.

5. The dialysis program. Treatment available in Seattle and Salt Lake City.

6. Adequate detoxification is being provided. An alcoholic treatment facility is in the planning stage.

The most expeditious way to apply for VA hospitalization is to go to a local doctor, he makes examination and determination, then calls the Medical Administration Service advising need for hospitalization. In some cases the private physician can service the veteran on an outpatient basis.

Jo Anne Meyers discussed eligibility requirements for admittance to a VA hospital. She explained that:

1. All veterans who served in the military are eligible for admission.

2. The financial sheet regarding inability to pay costs has been eliminated.

3. Discharge papers and C-number or social security number to be furnished on first application for hospitalization.

4. Chapter 31 trainees are eligible for outpatient treatment.

5. Emergency private hospital care can be authorized for (a) service-connected veterans when the illness will not permit the veteran to come to the VA hospital; (b) 100% totally and permanently disabled veterans, and (c) female veterans, whether service-connected or not.

Mr. Bleskey explained the mission of Veterans Services Division of the VA. He provided an overview of rights and entitlements to the following VA programs:

1. G.I. education and training.

2. Correspondence course training.

3. On-the-job training.

4. Apprenticeship training.

5. The home loan guaranty program.

6. Disability compensation. The need to establish a condition or disease incurred in service as soon as possible after discharge was emphasized. Claims may be reopened at any time. Right of appeal available. No limit on income.

7. The VA pension program.

8. The VA insurance program.

9. Flight training.

Complete telephone service is available - simply call Veterans Services Division for assistance. Vets-on-Campus are located at Eastern Montana College at Billings, Montana State University at Bozeman and University of Montana at Missoula; itinerant counselors work the Havre, Great Falls and Dillon areas. These staff are available to provide assistance wherever and whenever needed.

In the short time remaining before lunch, Mr. Raines had an opportunity to briefly explain personnel matters pertaining to GS and WG applications for employment. All VA employment, except doctors and nurses, is competitive. A register of qualified applicants is set up by Civil Service Commission. Mr. Walter stated VA is interested in getting qualified people on CSC registers and more input from Indians in the State of Montana who are interested in future CSC or VA employment.

The workshop adjourned at 5:00 p.m. and will reconvene tomorrow morning.

May 16, 1975

Mr. Barbeau opened the workshop at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Tom Yellowtail spoke a prayer in the Indian language before the group assembled.

The third panel, moderated by Duane Schindler, Opportunities, Inc., Great Falls, discussed "Special Needs of the Urban Indian (Landless, Off-reservation and Federally Recognized). Panel members were:

Wendell Brave, Social Worker, Opportunities, Inc.
Alfred McGillis, Great Falls

Mr. Schindler explained that the Landless Indians are those not registered on an enrollment book with any tribe. Many Indians were taken off the rolls after living in cities for ten years. 2,600-4,000 (approximately) Landless Indians reside in the Great Falls area. They do not have a reservation nor a hospital for free medical attention. They are not eligible for federal service from the Bureau of Indian Affairs as federally recognized Indians are, because Indian Health Service does not recognize them as eligible Indians. Landless Indians are growing in number, not only in Montana, but nationwide.

Mr. Schindler mentioned that all the VA procedures one goes through for VA benefits are not familiar to Indians. A real need to communicate is evident, particularly in the Great Falls area. He suggested VA people get together with Landless Indians and establish some sort of clearing house type of information office with Indian representatives in charge who could communicate with Indian veterans regarding their rights.

Mr. Walter replied that an interest has been shown for arrangements to have better VA coverage for the Indians in Great Falls and throughout the state. The Indians know who among their population would be active and cooperate in achieving this objective. With Indians taking the leadership role and setting up plans for an organization of interested veterans, then when VA knows where the need is they are willing to take the role of assisting wherever and whenever requested. One of the goals of this workshop is to see how Indians and VA together can come up with answers to the problem of communications. It is a two-way street - we need to think of "us."

Mr. Schindler said he and Wendell Brave will try to get something going.

Mr. Walter cited as an example of lack of understanding the fact that many Indians apparently are not aware that they are entitled to service at the Columbia Falls Montana Veterans Home. There are no Indian veterans in house there.

There was discussion as to how much weight the 5% veterans preference carries when one applies for a federal position. Someone mentioned that BIA and IHS have their own rules and veterans preference does not apply except for tribal enrolled members. Passing a resolution and routing it through Civil Service Commission channels for clarification purposes was suggested.

Mr. Schindler closed the discussion at 11:45 a.m.

The fourth panel, moderated by John Sunchild, Extension Service Aid, Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation, Box Elder, discussed the subject "Special Needs of the Reservation Indian." Panel members were:

Henry Four Souls, Detox Counselor, Rocky Boy's Agency
Alvin Windy Boy, CHR Director, Rocky Boy's Agency
Fawn Yellow Hawk Hill, Billings Indian Center
Pam Rosette, Assistant Director, Health Board, Rocky Boy's Agency

Mr. Sunchild began by saying there are seven Indian reservations in Montana, as follows:

Blackfeet Reservation, Browning (Blackfeet tribe)
Crow Reservation, Hardin (Crow tribe)
Flathead Reservation, Ronan (Salish and Kootenai tribes)
Fort Belknap Reservation, Harlem (Gross Ventre and Assiniboine tribes)
Fort Peck Reservation, Fort Peck (Sioux and Assiniboire tribes)
Northern Cheyenne Reservation, Lame Deer (Northern Cheyenne tribe)
Rocky Boy's Reservation, Box Elder (Chippewa and Cree tribes)

Mr. Sunchild provided an interesting explanation of the basic characteristics of the Indian, particularly those pertaining to the Cree tribe. Each tribe has a different dialect and different cultural rituals.

When the white man came on the Mayflower 350 years ago they promised to educate the Indians. Instead they tried to assimilate the Indians into the mainstream of their society.

Education has always been transmitted to the Indian children from the elders of the community. These teachings include:

Think of God and all of his spiritual children.
Be kind to your peers, elders and everybody.
Be considerate of others.
Respect others - elders, parents, brothers and sisters. Do this and you will be respected in return.
Be proud, but also be humble and not arrogant. Don't brag.
Share what you have. Be generous. Help others.
Be observant and listen.
Be sincere. Keep your word, it is your bond.
If you have something to say, make sure you know what you are talking about.
Be a good provider, a good worker, so the children do not go hungry.
Set a good example to others.
Be strong in your convictions, in those things you believe to be right.
Have patience.
Take care of your body and mind.
Above all, be honest with yourself and others.

This education always has been and still is close to nature. The Indian knows there is a Supreme Being who made the sky, the air, mother earth; because of their unique religious beliefs, Indians have an entire way of life. This education did not come over on the Mayflower.

Fawn Yellow Hawk Hill, a member of the panel representing the Indian Center, Billings, said she remembers the Indian teachings of her childhood and lives the teachings of her elders. Instead of complaining, she recommends Indians get out there and work on straightening things out.

Mr. Sunchild continued by saying we all know education in institutions of higher learning is needed on this continent. Ten years ago five Indian students from Rocky Boy's Reservation were attending college. This year there were 90, some of whom are studying to be doctors and lawyers.

In 1970 Rocky Boy's Agency petitioned the State of Montana for a school of their own. The state created another school district so that they could control their own school.

Indians are beginning to run some of their own programs on the reservations through contracts with the BIA. They are beginning to have a bigger voice in tribal affairs. Tribal health committees overlook the health needs of the reservation, including programs dealing with alcohol, day care centers, transportation, drugs and hypertension. However, all the programs are under-funded for the purposes intended. Pam Rosette, Assistant Director, Health Board, reported she worked on the Senior Citizens Program at Rocky Boy's Agency this year.

Mr. Sunchild closed by saying that since World War I Indians have been involved in all wars. Hopefully, for the first time the white man is beginning to recognize the Indian as a veteran. He thanked Mr. Walter and staff, the Mountain States RMP, and other individuals responsible for conducting this workshop. Many areas of concern to veterans on his reservation have been answered and he will take back to the tribe what he has heard.

12 Noon to 1:30 p.m. - Lunch.

The fifth panel, moderated by J. R. Smith, Director, Billings Area Indian Health Service, discussed "What Indian Health Service Offers and Coordination with Other Health Services."

Panel members were:

Susie Yellowtail, Nurse, Crow Reservation.
Marjorie Bear Don't Walk, Director, Indian Careers in Health, University of Montana.
Barbara Olson, Project Director of Minority Programs

Mr. Smith provided a history of the Indian Health Service. In the 1800's health service was provided by the War Department. From 1908 on it was handled by the Interior Department until the time it was moved to the U. S. Public Health Service in the 1950's. Indian Health Service deals with inpatient, outpatient and preventive and environmental aspects of health care.

The Billings area IHS provides health services in Montana, Wyoming and the Brigham City area in Utah. Hospital facilities are available in three Montana hospitals located at Browning, Fort Belknap Agency and Crow Agency. In addition they have health centers, which are staffed with a full range of health delivery personnel and are equipped to provide health care of comparable level to that found in a community hospital in rural America. IHS also has a contract service program in cooperation with local hospitals.

In 1971 the need for specialty type programs was recognized. IHS set up contract arrangements with the University of Washington for a mobile unit staffed with staff from the University. They visit each of the reservations for the purpose of screening ear problems. When attention is needed individuals are cared for by contracts with hospitals. IHS is proud of this program.

There has always been need for glasses for Indian children and adults. Two years ago IHS added to their staff two optometrists, one for the southern area and one for the northern area, to conduct screening tests on children and adults to determine need for eye glasses.

This past year the alcoholism detox program has been set up on each of the reservations. The local tribes made the arrangements on the reservations. They are effectively handling the program.

In the last two years IHS recognized the need that it is time for the Indian people to have a say in what is happening. Tribal health boards and committees are starting to provide services that have previously been provided by IHS. Cooperation very good.

The three main objectives of IHS are:

1. Provide assistance to the tribes.

2. Serve as an advocate to health services with other resources.

3. Provide highest quality of medical care possible.

Mrs. Yellowtail brought out the following points:

The biggest health need is freeing Indian people from alcohol.

There is a need for dedicated nurses.

It is time for Indians and non-Indians to get together and understand each other.

Marjorie Bear Don't Walk talked about the student recruitment program. Funds are low. The three members of her staff cover the entire state.

Some Indian students are attending the University in Missoula under the G.I. Bill. The goal is to get Indians from the reservations and other Indian communities in school in order to upgrade health care. It will take many years before there are enough Indian people to provide health care for Indians.

Barbara Olson, Project Director of Minority Programs, stated they are working on a proposal for getting Indian students involved in a summer employment-health care program at the VA. Students would be hired to work in the same areas they are studying in school to gain practical experience.

Students must go out of the state to attend schools of medicine, pharmacy and other medical professions. Nurses' training is available in Bozeman at Montana State University. Indians need financial assistance and moral support from their families and their tribes in these educational endeavors.

Panel discussions were concluded at 2:30 p.m. Those in attendance broke up into four discussion groups for one hour. Recommendations presented are attached. These recommendations, as well as recommendations listed on the evaluation sheets, will be reviewed at a critique to be held in the near future.

Summarization by Charles Walter:

Mr. Walter closed the workshop by saying each of us is committed to follow up and work out the recommendations and problems brought out at this workshop. Let him know of scheduled meetings where VA can participate and VA staff will be there. VA will cooperate with Mr. Smith, Division of Indian Health Service, and Mr. Merle Lucas, Coordinator of Indian Affairs, State of Montana.

Mr. Walter thanked Eddie Barbeau for the excellent job he did for the workshop and for the wonderful program provided at Fort Harrison. He thanked Mountain States RMP for the funding which made this workshop possible. He thanked each of the panels for the fantastic job they did and he expressed appreciation to everyone who helped to make this an outstanding program.

The workshop adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Grace Godward
Secretary

Final Summation - 4:00 p.m.

Group 1 - John Sunchild

1. Merle Lucas suggested his office write a proposal to the Tribal Councils in the areas of current funding programs. Mr. Lucas would act as liaison between VA, state and the tribes.

2. Home loans. The VA staff is interested in helping.

3. It was suggested that a list be furnished of the names of veterans from the various reservations. Mr. Lucas has a list from Fort Belknap and Mr. Sunchild has one from Rocky Boy's. This list could be used by VA in corresponding with veterans, especially those that have been discharged from military service recently.

4. Send information pamphlets to Tribal Councils for distribution.

5. Veterans preference is a Civil Service Commission question which should be directed to CSC.

6. Indian Health Service - too much time spent waiting, even in emergency cases.

7. Someone volunteered to furnish the addresses of the Congressional delegation. Most of the IHS service units are federally funded. It was agreed this was the route to go if nothing can be arranged at local level. Hopefully, through tribal health boards, some of the problems may be eliminated. It is the function of the Tribal Health Board to coordinate with IHS and the people they serve.

Group 2 - Jack Plumage

1. No tape recorder used. A lot of information disseminated the past two days. This group thought these meetings should be taped.

2. Mr. Walter should meet with the Tribal Councils and Inter-Tribal Boards at each reservation, make a trip to the Inter-Tribal Board and make the same type of statement and commitment as he made to us. This would not fall on deaf ears if Mr. Walter came personally. Mr. Walter replied, "We will be there."

3. Every effort be made to hire an Indian as one of the field coordinators to work with Mr. Lucas' office and his talent bank. The field coordinator should meet with the principals on the reservations. They have a listing of veterans. Mr. Plumage will take him to the veterans' homes where assistance is needed instead of asking them to come to a meeting.

4. There was discussion about qualifying Indians for federal employment. It was suggested that perhaps tribal counselors and people in Indian leadership positions could encourage Indians to take CSC tests.

5. It was suggested that some type of assistance be given to Indians who are applying for positions with BIA or other federal agencies when filling out SF 171's.

6. Mr. Plumage thanked the VA at Fort Harrison for taking this step to help the Indian people in Montana.

Group 3 - Duane Schindler

1. We would need an Indian veteran on each reservation to work with veterans on the reservation to identify problems and answers. This is already in the mill somewhere in VA planning.

2. Cooperation of state office and VA office suggested, especially in coordination of communications to veterans and coordination of visitations to reservations. The state and VA really need to cooperate. State people budget provides funds for visits. Can VA help?

3. Community health representatives be provided to assist on reservations. These people can assist in identification of veterans.

4. Send some of the forms for hospitalization to local doctors in Indian health units. This can be requested by a phone call to the VA. It would be effective if these forms were out in the areas where they will be used.

5. That Indian veterans duplicate their discharge papers at the county court house. So many veterans lose their papers and it is difficult to find another copy. Claims for compensation and pension must be supported by affidavits, as was mentioned yesterday.

6. Mr. Schindler commended VA on the workshop. We can all go home and take some of the suggestions we have from the VA and start to plan with the VA and our veterans in Great Falls.

Group 4 - Martin Bleskey

1. Dr. Mitschke clarified emergency treatment.

2. The Indian Health Service and those cases where they refer veterans in case the veteran has entitlement under VA were discussed.

3. Discussed the problem of Indian veteran population and arrived at the recommendation that a census of all Indian veterans be run through the Council to determine the number of veterans on each reservation in WW I, WW II, peace time and Vietnam Era.

4. Problems regarding disability proof were clarified.

5. Replacement of discharge papers was discussed. This can be done very easily by calling VA or a Service Officer for the proper form, which is

mailed to the St. Louis office to the address on the back of the form. It takes three weeks to get a copy.

6. Discussed the possibility of an Indian representative working with Indian veterans. Discussed the advisability of those interested in the position filing the necessary application, SF 171.

7. VA encourages applications for position of Counselor from the recently discharged veteran.

8. $250,000 alcohol grant made to the Indians since the first of the year. No one could clarify this. Mr. Bleskey is not familiar with it.

Appendix

Minutes of Planning Meetings

March 13, 1975

April 28, 1975

May 6, 1975

Minutes of the

"Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care" Planning Meeting

March 13, 1975

At 9:00 a.m. Director Charles C. Walter met with VA staff who will be available to answer questions which the panelists who will participate in today's planning meeting on a "Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care" Workshop might have. Present were:

Bill Raines, Personnel Officer
Francis Horn, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Ted Putra, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Phillip Pedersen, Chief, Medical Administration Service
Helen Haegele, Chief, Nursing Service
Ruby Kammerer, Associate Chief to Education, Nursing Service
Chuck Ladd - Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Robert Sexton - Counseling Psychologist, Veterans Services Division
Mary Stewart - Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Shirley Thennis - Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Dr. John R. McQuillan - Chief of Staff

Mr. Walter gave the above staff a briefing on the purpose of this morning's planning session. He reviewed the working papers which have been furnished by mail to the panelists invited to today's meeting and explained that suggested topics for discussion by the Indian panelists when they arrive will include:

Daily life style
Traditions and religion
Family and tribal relationships
Goals and orientation
Medicine men and women

Based on the input received from the panelists, topics for the final "Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care" Workshop will be decided upon. Other items to be decided will be the date for the final workshop and the names of those individuals the panelists would like to invite to the workshop. The main goal of the workshop is to be of service to those the VA serves.

At 9:30 a.m. the following panelists arrived:

Ed Barbeau, Helena Indian Alliance
Patrick Calf Looking, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Billings
John Sunchild, Rocky Boy Indian Reservation, Box Elder
Ken Gingras, North American Indian League, Deer Lodge
Charles "Jack" Plumage, Fort Belknap Community Council, Harlem
Rose J. Cline, Indian Health Service, St. Ignatius
Duane Schindler, Opportunities, Inc., Great Falls

Gary Day from Mountain States Regional Medical Program, Great Falls, was also present.

Everyone present was introduced.

Mr. Walter was pleased to announce that this program is sponsored by the Mountain States Regional Medical Program. A similar program was conducted last year at the Miles City VA Hospital. He explained that the focal point of our program will be an interchange of ideas geared to gaining a better understanding of the Indian population on and off the reservations throughout the State of Montana. He also explained to the panelists that all G.I. activities, as well as all functions in connection with the 160-bed VA Hospital, are handled by our VA Center.

Mr. Walter opened the discussion by stating we will plan today for the date of the final workshop, the program, publicity, and those who will be mailed invitations to attend, including providers in community hospitals, Service Officers, and Indian Health Service people, etc. Panel members are requested to submit a list of names to be invited to the Director as soon as possible. VA will do the staff work required in mailing invitational letters and printing programs.

After considerable discussion regarding a date, it was decided that the workshop would begin on Thursday, May 15, at 1:00 p.m. and conclude on Friday, May 16, 1975 at 5:00 p.m.

Next, the program was brought up. Mr. Walter suggested that program topics such as the following might be considered: (1) daily life style, (2) traditions and religion, (3) family and tribal relations, (4) goals and orientation, (5) medicine men and women.

It was decided that on Friday afternoon the large group will break into four small groups headed by one of the Indian moderators. The small groups will exchange ideas, discuss questions and come up with answers. Then the whole group comes together again, the moderators summarize the key points of issue brought out in the small discussion groups. Salient points presented will then be discussed by the large group.

Various topics which might be brought up for discussion on the program were brought up. After considerable discussion, it was decided that the program would be as follows:

PROGRAM 7

"DYNAMICS OF INDIAN CULTURE ON HEALTH CARE" WORKSHOP 50

MAY 15 and 16, 1975 19

Thursday, May 15, 1975

12:30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Registration.
1:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m.	Invocation and Salute to Flag . . . . . John Wooden Legs and Ed Barbeau
1:15 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	Welcome . . . . . Charles C. Walter Director, VA Center
1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	The Indian Stereotype and How It Affects Health Services . . Moderated by Charles "Jack" Plumage, Fort Belknap Community Council, Harlem
3:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.	Coffee Break
3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	VA Hospital Benefits and G.I. Benefits . . . . . Moderated by a VA employee

Friday, May 16, 1975

9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	Special Needs of the Urban Indian (Landless, Off-Reservation and Federally Recognized). . . . . Moderated by Duane Schindler, Opportunities, Inc., Great Falls
10:30 a.m.	Coffee Break
10:45 a.m. to 12 noon	Special Needs of the Reservation Indian . . . . . Moderated by John Sunchild, Rocky Boy Indian Reservation, Box Elder
12 noon to 1:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:15 p.m. to 2:15 p.m.	What Indian Health Service Offers and Coordination With Other Health Services . . . . . Moderated by J. R. Smith, Division of Indian Health Service (or Jay Harwood if Mr. Smith is not available)
2:15 p.m.	Coffee Break

2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Group Discussions (four groups) Group 1 - John Sunchild, Moderator Group 2 - Jack Plumage, Moderator Group 3 - Duane Schindler, Moderator Group 4 - A VA employee, Moderator
3:30 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.	Moderators ~~get~~ To organize their notes ~~together~~ Time
3:45 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Sumarization by: Moderators Gary Day, Mountain States Regional Medical Program Charles C. Walter, Director, VA Center, Fort Harrison
5:00 p.m.	Adjourn

Mr. Gingras will contact Mr. Wooden Legs and request him to give the Indian invocation.

Mr. Barbeau was asked if he would plan fitting ceremonies to tie in with Salute to the Flag.

Mr. Barbeau and Mr. Walter will discuss setting up a display Thursday evening.

Due to the large participation anticipated, Mr. Walter has made arrangements for the workshop to be held at Jorgenson's Holiday Motel on May 15 and 16.

Moderators will each plan their presentation and bring resource people they might want. Mr. Gingras asked whether the travel expenses of resource people who participate in the discussion panels could be paid by Mountain States Regional Medical Program. Mr. Day stated funds were previously budgeted and committed for the moderators and Mr. Wooden Legs. Mr. Walter asked each moderator to send him the names of resource people they want, by priority #1 and #2, as soon as possible. Indicate on the list:

Priority 1. Name, address, their roll. Can expenses be provided by their own agency or facility.

Priority 2. Same information as above.

When the above names are received and the amount of funds required is known, Mr. Day and Mr. Walter will determine if travel expense money is available. VA staff members are available to moderators in the presentation of their discussion topics.

Mr. Day suggested a sign-up sheet be used at the workshop registration desk. Equal numbers of four colored tabs to be handed out for participants to wear so that the size of the discussion groups will be balanced according to the color tabs individuals are wearing.

At the conclusion of the workshop, evaluation sheets will be handed out for participants to complete. The feed-in provided should assist VA in resolving any existing problems. Plans for a critique will be made following the workshop.

Mr. Walter mentioned again, if he or members of his staff can be of assistance, do not hesitate to get in touch with VA by letter or by phoning 442-6410, X210.

General discussion followed.

Mr. Sunchild stated he would like to prepare a listing of veterans which he will mail to Mr. Walter when completed.

Mr. Plumage will discuss with Mr. Swan, University of Montana, the possibility of receiving one credit for attending this workshop. He will advise Mr. Walter what he finds out.

Mr. Walter advised that VA has men in the field to provide service to veterans throughout the state. Staff are available for consultation with veterans at the following locations:

Jack Holzer, Vetrep on Campus, Eastern Montana College, Billings. Phone 657-2307.

Larry Paige, Vetrep on Campus, University of Montana, Missoula. Phone 243-2862

Rich Winston. Vetrep on Campus, Montana State University, Bozeman. Phone 994-4311.

Fred Jense, VA Hospital, Miles City, provides service to veterans in that part of the state. Phone 232-3060.

Roger Novotne provides service to veterans on an itinerant basis in the Kalispell area. Phone 442-6410, X 236.

A phone call to Mr. Walter when there is a problem, clarification is needed, or a request for VA staff to participate at meetings throughout the state will receive immediate attention.

VA has had a mobile van in the state for a month the last two years to help out in areas of concern. This fall the mobile van will tour the state during the month of September. Suggestions as to the areas where the mobile van may best serve Montana veterans this year will be welcomed by Mr. Walter.

Mr. Gingras requested that VA staff make a visit to the Montana Prison at Deer Lodge.

Panel members were invited to tour the VA facility with a staff member before they leave today.

Expense vouchers were prepared for panel members.

Mr. Walter expressed his appreciation to all participants who attended the planning meeting today.

Adjournment at 12 noon.

Grace Godward
Secretary

Minutes of the

"Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care" Workshop

April 28, 1975

At 2:00 p.m. on April 28 the Director met with VA staff who will participate in the Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care Workshop to be held on May 15 and 16, 1975 at Jorgenson's Motel.

Present were:

Martin Bleskey, Chief, Veterans Services Division
Helen Haegele, Chief, Nursing Service
Jo Anne Meyers, Chief, Ambulatory Care, Processing & Fee Services, Medical Administration Service
Shirley Thennis, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Isabel Smith, Federal Women's Coordinator
Dr. John R. McQuillan, Chief of Staff
Jim Palmer, Authorization Officer, Adjudication Division
Don Hayden, Chief, Adjudication Division
Bill Raines, Chief, Personnel Service
Dave Dean, District Counsel
Chuck Ladd, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee

Not present were:

Mary Stewart, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Wayne Ernstrom, Chief, Social Work Service
Al Olsen, Chief, Loan Guaranty Division
Francis Horn, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Ted Putra, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Phillip Pedersen, Chief, Medical Administration Service
Ruby Kammerer, Associate Chief to Education, Nursing Service
Dr. John Mitschke, Chief, Outpatient Service

Mr. Walter explained that he has been designated to administer this workshop by the Mountain States Regional Medical Program, which organization is funding the workshop in the amount of $2,800. Letters of invitation and brochures have been mailed by the Director's Office and Mountain States RMP.

The Director reviewed the philosophy of the workshop program as outlined on the brochure, the prime purpose of the workshop being to share and exchange ideas geared to gaining a better understanding of the problems, needs and cultures of the Indian population on and off the reservations throughout the State of Montana; as a result of better understanding, health care providers and GI providers will be able to provide better service to Indian veterans and their beneficiaries.

At the planning meeting held on March 13, the panel members and moderators who will conduct the program were in attendance, all of whom are Indians except for the VA portion of the program. It was decided to have a 1½-day program, as outlined in the brochure. The moderators will be reimbursed for room, meals and mileage expense; panel members will be reimbursed for room and meal expenses.

Plans for VA participation in the Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care Workshop were discussed. From 3:45 to 5:00 p.m. on May 15, VA Hospital Benefits and GI Benefits will be discussed. The VA panel will be comprised of:

Mr. Walter, Moderator.
Dr. Mitschke to discuss the medical point of view.
Jo Anne Meyers to discuss the eligibility facets of admission to the hospital.
Martin Bleskey to present an overview of GI benefits.
Mr. Raines to explain personnel matters in relation to Indians who may be interested in future Civil Service or VA employment.

On May 16 from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. those in attendance will break into four small groups, chairmaned by one of the Indian moderators in each of the four groups, for the purpose of group discussions. The Director suggested that there be VA representation on each of the four discussion groups. For instance, an EEO Committee members should be assigned to each of the four groups; Veterans Services Division should be represented at each group, etc. The four small groups will exchange ideas, discuss questions and come up with answers.

From 3:30 to 3:45 p.m. moderators will get their notes together and summarize the key points brought out in the four small discussion groups. Salient points will be presented to the Director for his use in presenting a summarization of the workshop to the entire audience.

The Director suggested that several card tables be set up during the 1½-day workshop, manned by VA resource staff who will be available to answer questions asked by individuals pertaining to various VA programs. For instance, one table for general VA information, one table for answering questions dealing with personnel and employment matters, one for GI benefits information, one for hospital information. By this method VA staff can find out what action needs to be taken in the various shops concerned to better serve the Indian population.

EEO Committee members have agreed to host the conference group and take care of registration. The Director will make arrangements with Jorgenson's for the no-host luncheon. Staff will share responsibility for finalizing the balance of the workshop arrangements.

The next meeting of the VA group who will participate in the workshop will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 6, in Room 315. Staff are requested to submit recommendations at that time regarding the role they or their staff can play in the Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care Workshop.

Plans for a critique will be made following the workshop for the purpose of clarifying questions brought up at the workshop which remain unanswered and for the purpose of formulating objectives VA will embark upon in reaching the main goal, that of providing the best of service to the Indian veterans and their beneficiaries.

Grace Godward
Secretary

Minutes of the

"Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care" Workshop

May 6, 1975

At 10:00 a.m. the Director met with VA staff for the purpose of finalizing plans in connection with the Dynamics of Indian Culture on Health Care Workshop to be held on May 15 and 16, 1975 at Jorgenson's Holiday Inn.

Present were:

James M. Larson, Assistant Director
John D. Graveley, Management Analyst
Don Hayden, Chief, Adjudication Division
Jim Palmer, Authorization Officer, Adjudication Division
Mike Peck, Chief, Building Management Service
Dr. John R. McQuillan, Chief of Staff
George Martin, Chief, Engineering Service
Ken Dow, Police Supervisor, Engineering Service
David Dean, District Counsel
Merle Inman, Loan Guaranty Division
Jo Anne Meyers, Medical Administration Service
Shirley Thennis, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Chuck Ladd, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Mary Stewart, Equal Employment Opportunity Committee
Isabel Smith, Federal Women's Coordinator
Dr. John Mitschke, Chief, Outpatient Service
Bill Raines, Chief, Personnel Service
Wayne Ernstrom, Chief, Social Work Service
Martin Bleskey, Chief, Veterans Services Division
Lee Phillips, Veterans Services Division
Gerry Gessner, Veterans Services Division
Robert Sexton, Counseling Psychologist, Veterans Services Division

Opening Ceremonies, May 15

The Director and Mr. Eddie Barbeau from Helena Indian Alliance, who will assist with special arrangements for the ceremonial part of the program on May 15, met last week. It is doubtful if Mr. John Woodenlegs will be able to attend but we are fortunate that Mr. Tom Yellowtail, an Indian medicine man from Wyola, will be available to open the program with an Indian prayer; Warren Bearcloud will sing an Indian song with Mr. Barbeau narrating; a flag ceremony with Indian drums will conclude the opening ceremonies. The flag which will be displayed at Jorgenson's was presented to Mr. Barbeau by service organizations.

Hospital Lobby Display, May 14

The Director and Mr. Barbeau discussed a display for the hospital lobby. On May 14 the decorations now in the lobby will be taken down, temporarily stored, and replaced with Indian artifacts. Mr. Peck and his crew will assist Mr. Barbeau in putting up the Indian display. Engineering will have a truck available. The display case will be utilized for an Indian exhibit. Police security will be necessary while the lobby area is open, as some of the Indian artifacts are very valuable. Pictures will be taken of all activities throughout the week.

Hospital Grounds Display

An Indian tepee will be set up in the circle in front of the hospital. A flag presented to Mr. Barbeau by Senator Mansfield will be displayed. Mr. Barbeau will notify us when he will need a truck to bring out the tepee and poles. Engineering, Building Management and Helena Indian Alliance people will assist in setting up the tepee. The Avenue of Flags will be set up by 8:00 a.m. on May 16.

Open House, May 16

Mr. Walter will announce to the workshop group on the 15th that those without transportation may assemble at 7:45 a.m. at Jorgenson's for a tour of the VA hospital from 8:00 to 8:30 a.m. on May 16 prior to the time the workshop convenes at 9:00 a.m. George Martin will check with National Guard to see if we can have the use of a standby bus for this purpose. Staff will be needed to provide hostess duties during this hospital tour.

Lunch, May 16

At 11:45 a.m. on May 16 the workshop will break for no-host lunch in either the main dining room area of Jorgenson's or wherever the attendees choose to eat lunch. Mr. Walter will notify Jorgenson's of the number to plan for.

Publicity

Karl Edgerton, Information Service Representative, Seattle, will arrive on May 14 to work with the Management Analyst on publicity. A statewide release is planned for the Sunday (May 11) dailies throughout the state; news releases will also be broadcast live over Intermountain Network. Following the workshop Mr. Edgerton will write up a national news release as to what transpired at the workshop.

Mr. Walter appeared on Q2TV in Billings last week, at which time he advertised this Indian workshop and generated interest. He will appear on Q2TV again on Thursday, May 8.

On Monday, May 12, at 8:45 a.m., the directors of the three local hospitals will discuss National Hospital Week on Roseta's radio program, at which

time Mr. Walter will mention the Indian workshop. Our Indian program fits in beautifully with National Hospital Week.

General Preparations

The Indian moderators have reported to the Director that they are ready with their presentations. Two large posters will be displayed at the workshop site indicating that the workshop is being sponsored by Mountain States RMP and the VA.

All invitations placed in the mail had program brochures attached to them. 100 more brochures will be available at the workshop for distribution to those who do not bring them along.

Name tags. Mr. Raines requested he be furnished the names and titles of VA personnel who will attend the workshop so that name tags may be prepared by May 14th. It was suggested VA purchase name tags for staff members.

A log book will be used as a sign-in sheet.

Discussion regarding taping the entire workshop proceedings was held. It was decided not to tape.

Overtime will be paid, where necessary.

Registration

EEO committee members will handle registration for the workshop. At time of registration tabs in four colors will be handed out. Attendees will be requested to wear them for identification purposes to indicate at which of the four tables they sill sit during the group discussions on May 16 at 2:30 p.m. In this way the size of the four discussion groups will be balanced.

A general information table will be staffed with VA personnel to help attendees throughout the workshop with any assistance they may need.

VA Benefits Information Tables

It is planned to set up eight tables dealing with matters pertaining to GI benefits information, federal employment, personnel matters, hospital information, adjudication, loan guaranty, equal employment opportunity, general VA information, etc. Some of the eight tables may be set up in the Big Sky conference room at Jorgenson's. Signs will identify the information obtainable at the various tables. Several VA staff, who will act as "floaters", will wander around to assist anyone who needs help during the workshop.

Division/Service Chiefs will share responsibility for who will staff the eight tables and how they will be arranged.

The Director requested a hand-out be prepared by Friday, May 9, outlining who will participate at the workshop, and their role. Also, who will be staffing various tables and what their roles will be. This information is for internal use as a guide as to exactly how activities will proceed.

Panel Discussions at Workshop

The workshop program will be controlled by the moderators assigned to each of the subjects outlined in the program brochure. All are Indians except for the VA personnel who will conduct a panel discussion of VA Hospital Benefits and G.I. Benefits on May 15 from 3:45 to 5:00 p.m. The VA panel will be comprised of:

Mr. Walter, moderator.
Dr. Mitschke will discuss the medical point of view. Provide hospital application forms and other forms, where needed.
Jo Anne Meyers will discuss the eligibility facets of admission to the hospital.
Martin Bleskey will present an overview of GI benefits.
Mr. Raines will explain personnel matters in relation to Indians who who may be interested in future Civil Service or VA employment. Provide literature and application forms.

Panel members will speak in the order listed above. Mr. Walter wishes to provide 15 minutes of time for questions and answers, at which time VA staff in attendance may be called upon to answer inquiries.

Evaluation

Mr. Walter was provided with evaluation sheets by Mountain States RMP to hand out at the workshop. These will be completed by attendees at the wrap-up portion of the program. VA "floaters" are requested to keep a list of questions asked of them so these can be reviewed along with the evaluation sheets at a critique following the workshop. The feed-in and recommendations provided should assist VA in resolving any existing problems and as a guide in providing the best of service to Indian veterans and their beneficiaries.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Grace Godward
Secretary